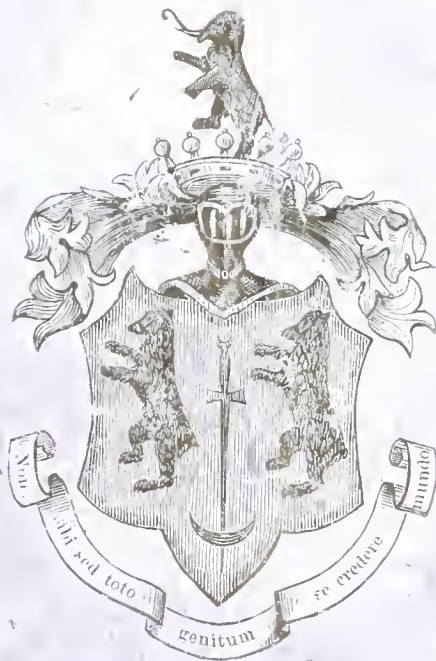



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AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
A. COMSTOCK, M.D.
IN TROCHAIC VERSE.



PHILADELPHIA:
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Home. Robert
List of the Emigrants.



ANDREW COMSTOCK, M D

[Written for A. J. Graham's Phonographic Journal.]

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
ANDREW COMSTOCK, M. D.

PRINCIPAL OF THE VOCAL AND POLYGLOT GYMNASIUM; AUTHOR OF
THE "PAMPHONETICON, OR PHONETIC ALPHABET FOR ALL
LANGUAGES;" "A SYSTEM OF ELOCUTION;" "A
TREATISE ON PHONOLOGY," ETC. ETC.

Philadelphia, July 12, 1857.

To A. J. GRAHAM, ESQ.



'VE received your letter, Graham,
A. J. Graham, Phonetician,
I received it, sir, last evening—
I have read it; I have scanned it;
I've reflected on its contents—
I will answer it in this wise:

Then you really want my *likeness*?
Want it for the coming number
Of your Phonographic Journal;
And you also want my hist'ry?
Want it written on *two pages*!
Want it written by myself, too;
Or, my right-hand man, Pantoleon.

(3)

Well, as no one knows about me
More, perhaps, than I myself do,
I will undertake the labor.
But the space you have allotted
Being too small, sir, for the story
Of so great a man as I am,
(For my weight is full two hundred!)
I can give you but an outline,
But a very meagre outline,
Of my life upon this planet.
And that you in time may have it,
Have it for the coming number
Of your Phonographic Journal,
I will write it out instanter—
Write it, too, in lines poetic,
In the style of Hiawatha.
And I'll send it to you, Graham,
Send it shortly with my likeness,
Drawn with skill, and to the life, sir,
By my friend, Professor Grover,*
And engraved by Crump, his pupil,
Who, though young, is e'en already
Ranked among the first of artists.
Having written quite sufficient,
As I think, sir, for a *Preface*,
For a sort of *Introduction*,
I will now begin my hist'ry.

* Professor of Ancient Languages in Delaware College.

I was born in Greenfield Township,
In the county, Saratoga,
In the mighty State, called Empire,
When the country was all new there,
When it was but sparsely settled,
And when wolves, and bears, and foxes,
Catamounts, and skunks, and panthers,
Roamed the forest unmolested.
I was born, sir, in a valley—
In a valley, 'tween two mountains:
On the East, the Hill, called Chestnut,
Rose in grandeur toward the heavens;
On the West, great Sacnadaga
Reared his awful crest above us;
On the North, but four miles distant,
Were the roaring falls of Hudson;
On the South, just eight miles from us,
Were the Springs of Saratoga,
Which have since become so famous
For their hygienic waters.
Of the *time* when I was born, sir,
I have not the least remembrance,
And can give the best of reasons—
Consciousness was not developed.
I have *heard* 'twas in September,
In the year ——— I will not tell you,
For I'll give you nought on *hearsay*;
And, besides, ——— *I'm in the market!*

Having always had a taste for
Elocution, exhibitions called dramatic,
Music, painting — all the fine arts—
After I had got the *gradum*,
Doctor Artis Medicinæ,
Datum Universitate
Nostrâ Pennsylvaniensi,
I at once turned my attention
To these branches; mainly, though, to
Elocution, and to music:
These I diligently studied;
But, especially the former.
When I was investigating,
And much occupied in teaching
Elocution — noble science!
I discovered how to cure, sir,
Stamm'ring, and defective utt'rance,
And to change falsetto voices
From the high and squeaking treble
To sonorous *baritono*.
If you wish to know, friend Graham,
What success has crowned my efforts
In the treatment of such cases,
And in teaching elocution,
Since the time when first I made, sir,
This divine art my profession,
With great pleasure I refer you
To the many thousand students,

Scattered over every country,
Who, from me, have had instruction.

I have recently established,
In my Vocal Institution,
A department, polyglotic.
This is under the direction
Of my learned friend, Pantoleon,
Who is far the greatest linguist
That I ever yet have met with:
He not only can translate, sir,
But can speak with perfect freedom,
Sev'ral languages of nations,
European, Asiatic,
And pronounce them so correctly,
That no stranger could decide, sir
Which of them is his vernac'lar.

Anno Christi eighteen hundred
One-and-thirty, I first published,
On a Chart, a Chart, Phonetic,
All the sounds there are in English;
And in eighteen forty-six, sir,
Gave the world a separate letter
For each sound in every language—
Gave an Alphabet, *Phonetic*,
Universal and Phonetic—
Having signs for intonation,

And for accent and inflection.
In this alphabet I've printed
Periodicals and pamphlets,
Books and papers, charts, and so forth,
Quite too numerous to mention.
And I'm writing at this time, sir,
In this Alphabet, Phonetic,
Writing, sir, in French and English,
Works designed for publication—
Works of very great importance
To ambitious, lingual students
Who would master either language,
Master it without a master,
And in almost less than no time.

Should you ask how many volumes
I from time to time have written,
Ask how many books I've published,
What their contents, their dimensions,
Appellations, forms, and prices,
I should answer, I should tell you,
I should say to you, friend Graham,
Read the Catalogue I send you:
You will find the very *titles*
Of my lingual publications,
If, in full, they should be printed,
Quite enough to fill the pages
You've allotted for my hist'ry.

Where I got my education,
How I gained my lingual knowledge,
O'er what obstacles I've triumphed,
Through what difficulties struggled,
Ere I reached the towering summit
Of the lofty Hill of Science,
On which now I wave my chapeau,
I've not space enough to tell you;
For the pages you've assigned me,
As the limit of my story,
Are both filled from top to bottom.

In conclusion, I will say, sir,
Though our alphabets may differ,
Though we don't agree in all things,
I'm your friend and fellow-laborer
In the cause of lingual science,

ANDREW COMSTOCK, M. D., *Phonist*,

Number *five-nought-eight* on Arch street,
Formerly *one-hundred-two* called,
In the city of Friend William,
William Penn, the famous Quaker
Who was founder of the city,
And who named it *Philadelphia*.

APPENDIX.



THE following extract of a letter which the writer received, in 1849, from J. L. Comstock, M. D., of Hartford, Connecticut, the well-known author of a number of valuable scientific works, furnishes us with the *important* information that the Comstocks are descended from a *noble* family, and that their genealogy can be traced far back into the mists of antiquity.

“It is only within the last year,” says Dr. J. L. C., “that I have been able to obtain the family arms, and which, I find, give us a high and honorable antiquity, though attainted with *treason*; but which, you know, at the period in question, was not an uncommon trait among *high* families. I have the arms emblazoned, of which you can have a copy if you please. The origin and explanation are as follows:

“At the Muniment office, at Frankfort on the Main, in Germany, is a pedigree of the family of Comstock—there spelled indifferently, both Komstohk, and Comstohk. This pedigree gives nine generations previous to 1547, at which time, Charles Von Komstohk, a baron of the Roman Empire, was implicated in the so-called ‘Von Benedict treason,’ and escaped into England with several other noblemen of Austria and Silesia.

“The arms are, or, two bears rampant, sable, muzzled, gules in chief—in base a sword issuing from a crescent, the point downwards, all of the last.

“Crest. Upon the arms a baronial helmet of the German Empire, mantled, or and gules, surmounted by a baron’s coronet, jewelled proper, and issuing therefrom an elephant rampant, also proper.

"The bears imply courage. The sword issuing from the crescent shows that the family had fought against Turks. The elephant in the crest was granted by the German authority as an indication of personal prowess and sagacity.

"It would appear from this record, that the family was of German origin, and after escaping from that country to England, came to America. This may account for the fact, that none of the name, at least so far as I can ascertain, remain in England. The arms are not contained in any book of heraldry published in England, probably because the family did not remain in that country to do deeds of valor. The name, as originally spelled, is clearly German—at what period it was Anglicized, or Americanized, is unknown."

I am indebted to Dr. J. L. Comstock for a copy of the family arms, from which this engraving has been made :



Tradition says that, many years ago (probably 200), three brothers of the name of Comstock emigrated from Wales to this country. Two of them had families—one of the two settled in Woodstock, Rhode Island; the other in Connecticut. The former, whose name was *Samuel*, was a progenitor of mine—I am of the sixth generation from him; hence, he was my great-grandfather's grandfather.

My father's name was *Gideon*; my mother's, *Mary*. Both of them were descended from the Rhode Island branch of the Comstock family—indeed, all my ancestors, who were born in this country, were born in Rhode Island. Both of my parents died when I was but a youth—leaving two children, myself, and sister Mary.

The name of my maternal grandfather was *Andrew Comstock*. He died in Albany, N. Y., before I was born.

The name of my paternal grandfather was *Adam Comstock*; and, as he was a man of considerable distinction, I will give a brief outline of his history. At the age of 23 he was married to Margaret McGregore, aged 17. By her he had 17 children—all of whom, except the last, were born in Warwick, Rhode Island. The 17th was born in Greenfield (now Corinth), Saratoga County, N. Y. This was the late Rev. Dr. A. M. G. Comstock, of Joliet, Illinois. He was a man of great intellectual powers, and very industrious habits; and he ever seemed to act in accordance with the precept, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." He was a farmer, a physician, and a Methodist clergyman; and he succeeded well in each of these vocations. Five of my grandfather's children are still living. The two oldest of the five, being twins, are now 87 years of age; the youngest of the five is 76. The latter is the Rev. O. C. Comstock, M. D., of Marshall, Michigan, who, in his palmy days, was, not only physically, but mentally, one of the finest specimens of the genus *homo* that I have ever seen. This uncle, who was my

preceptor in the healing art, and who was for many years a successful practitioner of medicine, has filled a number of important offices: he has been a member of the Legislature of New York, a member of Congress, chaplain to Congress, a judge, for a long time the esteemed pastor of a church of the Baptist denomination, &c. &c. But to return—

The person of my paternal grandfather was tall and imposing—being, when in his prime, six feet in height, and well proportioned. His deportment was generally grave and dignified—well calculated to command the respect, and even the veneration, of all who approached his person; he was, in truth, one of *nature's* noblemen. Before the American Revolution, he was one of the king's justices of the peace, and a major in his forces. On the breaking out of the War of the Revolution, however, he entered the American army with the determination to use all his energies in the defence of his country's rights. In the language of his biographer—"He was a soldier by nature—powerful in body, of undaunted courage, an enthusiastic patriot, and a good disciplinarian. He had the confidence of Washington, who raised him to the rank of colonel in the Continental line. At the brilliant victory of Red Bank, he was the officer of the day. Alternately with General Smith of Maryland, he commanded at the successful defence of Mud Fort,"* (now Fort Mifflin). He also shared the various sufferings of his brave companions in arms at Valley Forge. After this, from a domestic affliction—a severe sickness of his excellent wife—he resigned his commission, which General Washington reluctantly accepted, and gave him an honorable discharge.

After the close of the war, my grandfather became a member of the Legislature of his native State. In 1785, he emigrated to the State of New York. He resided one year in Schenectady. He then purchased a farm in Greenfield Town—

* The Sages and Heroes of the American Revolution, p. 426.

ship (now Corinth), Saratoga County, on which he lived 33 years, or till the termination of his earthly existence. While a citizen of the Empire State, he was for many years a member of the Legislature—part of the time in the Assembly, and part of the time in the Senate, in which bodies he exercised a controlling influence. He was also for many years a judge of the Court of Common Pleas in and for the County of Saratoga—to which office he seems to have been peculiarly adapted. He was not bred to the profession of law, but his strong mind, and investigating habits—his sound judgment and competent knowledge of that science, were abundantly manifest in his judicial opinions.

My honored grandfather entered the spirit world on the 10th of April, 1819, having lived in the rudimental sphere about 79 years; and his cast-off garments were deposited in a wardrobe prepared for them in the family burying-ground, on the old homestead—now in the possession of James Angell, Esq., a relative of the family; and I have the satisfaction to add that, recently, there has been erected over them an appropriate monument to his memory, by his affectionate and patriotic grandson, Dr. O. C. Comstock, Jr., of Michigan.

GENEALOGY OF ANDREW COMSTOCK, M. D., FOR SIX GENERATIONS.

1. SAMUEL COMSTOCK, my great-grandfather's grandfather, emigrated from Wales, and settled in Rhode Island—probably about 200 years ago. He had 8 children.

2. HASADIAH, the second child of Samuel, was my grandfather's grandfather. He was married twice, and had 15 children—10 by the first wife, and 5 by the second.

Paternal Branch.

3. GIDEON, the 3d child of Hasadiah by his first wife, was my paternal great-grandfather. He was married twice, and had three children by each wife.

4. ADAM COMSTOCK, the 1st child of Gideon by the first wife, was my paternal grandfather. He had 17 children.

Maternal Branch.

3. HASADIAH, the 6th child of Hasadiah by his first wife, was my maternal great-grandfather. He had 10 children.

4. ANDREW COMSTOCK, the 2d child of Hasadiah, was my maternal grandfather. He had 5 children.

5. GIDEON, the 4th child of Adam Comstock, married Mary, the 4th child of Andrew Comstock. They had two children:

6. ANDREW COMSTOCK, M. D., and Mary Comstock (now Mrs. Morey).

POETICAL CORRESPONDENCE.

A LETTER

FROM A. C. MOREY TO ANDREW COMSTOCK, M. D.

Glen Cove, N. Y., July 30, 1855.

DEAR UNCLE:

I wish to know if I can board with you during two terms of Medical Lectures—the first, the coming winter; the second, a year from then. If so, circumstances at home permitting, I will be with you at the commencement of the term.

From your Pedagogue Nephew,

ANDREW C. MOREY.

DR. A. COMSTOCK, Philadelphia.

ANSWER.

Philadelphia, Aug. 3, 1855.



Y Nephew dear, incline your ear,
And listen to my song—
It's my belief it will be brief:
So, 't will not keep you long.

The little note you to me wrote
Has come—I've read it through;
Without delay, I send to-day
This answer back to you:—

You wish to know, I plainly see,
If I will let you board with me

While you attend the lectures here
In this, and the succeeding year;
And our M.D.s to you impart
A knowledge of the healing art.
I'll board you, sir, the present year,
If nothing adverse interfere;
And you will keep quite circumspect,
And do what I shall now direct:—

You never here must smoke, or chew
Tobacco, sir; for, if you do,
Not only you'll yourself disgrace,
But stand a chance *to lose your place*.
Tobacco, sir, I do despise—
It both offends my nose and eyes;
I cannot bear the dirty stuff,
In leaf, in pigtail, or in snuff:
So do not think to bring it here
Where nought unsavory can appear.
You must not be out late at night,
Or you'll disturb your Uncle, quite;
With dirty feet ne'er pass the door,
Nor ever spit upon the floor;
Nor mar the table with your toes,
Nor, while you're eating, blow your nose;
Nor pick your teeth, when you are done,
Before you leave the dining-room;
Nor backward lean upon your chair
When you are chatting with the fair,

Nor e'en at any other time—
It does not with politeness chime.
Besides, I tell you, if you do,
You'll injure chair and carpet too;
Indeed, the chair you might break down,
Which then would cost you half a crown
To get repaired. This, I believe,
My worthy friend, would make you grieve:
You would not like to pay out cash
To mend a chair that's gone to smash.
Then sit erect; and, if you can,
Act out the perfect gentleman:
Look wise, and dignified, and grave—
Be cheerful, though—each morning shave,
And dress in garments neat and clean,
Such as on decent folks are seen.

Then I'll not be ashamed of you,
Nor shall I e'er, indeed, demur
To introduce you to a friend—
“My Nephew, Mr. Morey, Sir.”

Your Uncle, ANDREW.

Mr. A. C. MOREY, Glen Cove, N. Y.

REPLY

OF A. C. MOREY TO THE LETTER OF DR. COMSTOCK.

Glen Cove, N. Y., August 5, 1855.



DEAR Uncle, Yours of August third
 Was yesterday received;
 I thank you for your kind reply—
 It hath my mind relieved;
 For now I think we'll harmonize,
 And make time smoothly go;
 And I opine you'll think so, too,
 When you read what's below:—

Right glad am I to know that you
 Tobacco neither smoke nor chew.
 It ought to be, as is your plan,
Eschewed by every decent man.
 The filthy weed I never chew,
 Nor make my nose a chimney-flue
 For self, or vulgar chums; nor yet
 Make my proboscis a dust-pit.
 I tell you, sir, (to give more edge
 Unto my words) I've signed a pledge
 That I will neither smoke nor chew,
 But lead a decent life, like you.
 My Ma and Uncle certainly
 Are children of one family;

For Mother me right early taught
That *scrapers* were not made for nought,
And that I should not ever spit
In places where folks stand, or sit;
Nor mar the table with my toes,
Nor, when I'm eating, blow my nose;
Nor pick my teeth, when I am done,
Before I leave the dining-room.
Lock up at night whene'er you choose;
My lodging I shall seldom lose.
As to my tilting back my chair
When I am chatting with the fair,
I think one turn completely o'er,
And one good smash upon the floor,
Would teach a lesson that would tend
Such acts thereafter to amend.
I have no doubt your practised eye
Will many corners, rough, espy:
By word, or look, these, when you find,
Trim off exactly to your mind.
"Be cheerful!" Thus I like to be;
But, "shave each morn"—alas! ah me!—
Pray, what's the use to shave off clean,
A chin on which no beard is seen?
But e'en the *form* I will go through,
Of shaving, if required by you!
My dress of such a kind shall be
As you shall be well pleased to see:

True, not extravagant in price,
But always "neat, and clean," and *nice*.
And sure I will, as far 's I can,
"Act out the perfect gentleman."
In these few lines you will detect
A pledge to do what you "direct."

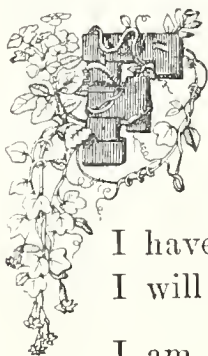
So, Uncle, when my school is done,
I shall not long "demur"
To take up my abode with you.
Your Nephew,

A. C. MOREY, Sir.

A. COMSTOCK, M. D., Philadelphia.

A LETTER

FROM DR. COMSTOCK, OF PHILADELPHIA, TO A FORMER
PUPIL, DR. B——, OF ——, CONNECTICUT.



FROM the land of steady habits,
From the village you were born in,
From that lovely, charming village,
I've received your letter, Doctor,
And the bill you placed within it.
I have read it; I have scanned it—
I will answer it in this wise:

I am glad to hear you prosper
In the place of your forefathers,
In the land of ancient blue-laws,

In the land of ox-horn gun-flints,
In the land of wooden nutmegs.
Glad am I to learn that you have
Pushed ahead of all your rivals,
Left them far back in the distance,
Far back in the misty distance;
And that e'en already you are,
By your own intrinsic merit,
At the head of your profession.
Glad am I to learn that you can
'Tend a fracture, cure a fever,
Bleed your patient, if he needs it,
Make a hole right through the windpipe,
Operate upon the eye, and
Cut a leg off quite as coolly
As your friend can carve a turkey.
Glad am I to learn you speak straight,
That your tongue no longer stammers,
But, indeed, moves quite as glibly
As the rattling tongue of woman.

Sorry am I that you cannot
Get your money here collected:
Mudge is poor, sir, as *Job's turkey*,
Not in business for himself yet,
Only works he for his brother.
And his brother seems quite poor, too,
Doing business in a small way—
He's no cash for Jeremiah.

Mudge's mansion is a small house—
Rather smaller than a hen-coop—
Not much bigger than a bird-cage.
I myself have been to see it,
Crawled up through a narrow stairway,
Through a narrow, winding stairway;
'Twas, indeed, so very narrow
That my cloak was brushed from off me,
Covered o'er with dust and cobwebs.
Landed in the second story,
I beheld there, pale and sickly,
Mudge's wife, alone and cheerless,
With her needle, darning stockings.
Mudge himself came up the stairway,
Through the narrow, winding stairway,
Through the dust and through the cobwebs,
And with awkwardness and stiffness
Sat down on a stool before me,
Wondering why I came to his house,
Why I came so far to see them.
Very slowly from my pocket,
And with countenance quite solemn,
I drew forth your bill of charges.
Mudge stretched out his hand and took it—
Opening wide his eyes with wonder—
Read it through from top to bottom,
Turned it over, re-perused it,
Bit his lip, and made wry faces,
Then exclaimed with voice of thunder,

“Such a bill I can't pay nohow—
Such a bill I can't pay never!”
I, of course, at once retreated,
Hurried down the narrow stairway,
Rushing through the dust and cobwebs,
With resolve to give Mudge *Jesse*
In a piece of *flaming poetry*!
Now, my friend, your case is hopeless,
Or, at least, I think it is so
While you're in this state of being.
But, no doubt, you'll be rewarded
After you have passed o'er Jordan—
Get your pay in full, with interest—
Get it in the distant future,
On the banks of misty Lethe,
Or “the Islands of the Blessed,
In the Kingdom of Ponema,
In the Land of the Hereafter!”

Should you think me mad or crazy,
From this letter which I send you,
Should you ask me why I write so,
Why I write in dogg'el blank verse,
I should answer, I should tell you,
“I'm not mad, sir, I'm not crazy—
I've been reading ‘HIAWATHA.’”

Yours truly, A. COMSTOCK.

Philadelphia, February 29, 1856.

A LETTER.

THE FOLLOWING LINES (IN THE PHONETIC ALPHABET,) ACCOMPANIED WITH THE FIRST EDITION OF THE TREATISE ON PHONOLOGY, WERE SENT TO AN UNCLE, WHO WAS A FARMER, A PHYSICIAN, AND A CLERGYMAN.

Philadelphia, April 2, 1846.

I'VE been engaged, as by these lines you'll see,
In making perfect our orthography.
Our ancestors, 'as if their sons to bother,
Spelled words one way—pronounced them in another;
By the same sign expressed quite different sounds,
Which much, you know, the pupil's mind confounds.
But we, who live in this enlightened age,
When nothing but improvement is the rage,
When commerce brings her merchandize from far,
On snorting steamboats and the flying car,
When wooden men are made to speak and sing,
And news is carried on the lightning's wing,
When every art is to perfection brought,
And every language "in six lessons taught,"
Will perfect order out of chaos bring,
And make our spelling quite an easy thing.
This has been done, as by my book you'll see,
Which bears the title of PHONOLOGY.
Peruse the work, not with a hasty glance,
If you the cause of science would advance,
But with due care, and with inquiring mind,
As all will do who'd benefit mankind,
Whether they peddle pills, young children teach,
Follow the plough, or in the pulpit preach.

ANDREW COMSTOCK.

Rev. Dr. A. M. G. Comstock, Joliet, Illinois.

RECOMMENDATION
OF
Dr. Comstock's Phonetic Alphabet
WITH A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF
THE PRESENT PHONETIC ALPHABETS.

WE have carefully compared the Phonetic Alphabet of Dr. A. Comstock, of Philadelphia, with that of Isaac Pitman, of England, now used by himself in that country, and by Andrew J. Graham in this; also with the modification of the said alphabet as used by Longley, Prosser, and Benn Pitman, in Cincinnati; and we have no hesitation in saying that the Alphabet of Dr. Comstock is far preferable, for the following reasons: —

1. Dr. Comstock's alphabet is founded on a correct analysis of the elementary sounds of the language; whereas Pitman's alphabet, as well as its modification, is founded on an incorrect analysis of these sounds.*

2. The alphabet of Dr. C. contains *all* the letters of the old alphabet; whereas the other alphabets reject *three* of them, viz., *c*, *q*, and *x*.

3. In Dr. C.'s alphabet, the letters of the *old* alphabet are employed in a way which essentially aids the pupil in acquiring

* We do not here wish to be understood as referring, in any respect whatever, to Pitman's *Short-Hand* Alphabet. His *Phonography*, as he calls it, though not strictly *phonetic*, is admitted to be the best system of Short-Hand which has yet been devised.

a knowledge of other languages, as they are appropriated, as far as practicable, to the corresponding sounds in the different languages in which the Roman alphabet is used; whereas, in Pitman's alphabet, as well as in its modification, the letters of the Roman alphabet are *not* employed in a way which affords the learner of other languages essential aid.

4. Whenever there is a sound common to the English and the Greek, and the English having no letter for it, but the Greek a letter appropriated to the sound, this letter, in Dr. C.'s alphabet, is made to represent the same sound; whereas, in Pitman's alphabet, as well as in its modification, not one Greek letter which is employed by him, is appropriated to the sound that it represents in the Greek. Not only so: Mr. Pitman has formed new letters which are inelegant, when he might have taken Greek letters which are beautiful, to represent sounds that are common to the two languages.

5. All the letters in Dr. C.'s alphabet are symmetrical, and, in print, afford a beautiful page; whereas, in Pitman's alphabet, as well as in its modification, many of the letters are uncouth, and, in print, make the page unseemly.

6. Dr. C.'s alphabet has *tone-marks* to indicate accent, inflection, and intonation, which enable one to read, at any period however distant, an author exactly as he intended; but Pitman's alphabet, as well as its modification, is destitute of tone-marks, and, consequently, affords no such aid.

In conclusion, we would say that Dr. C.'s alphabet is the only one which we have ever seen that deserves the name of *phonetic*, for it is the only one which has a letter appropriated to every elementary sound of the language, and signs to represent the various modifications of the voice in reading and speaking. And we verily believe that this alphabet would not only enable the pupil to resolve vocal words into their elementary sounds, and to read with propriety, but would greatly facilitate his acquisition of our present anomalous orthography.

With these views we cordially recommend Dr. Comstock's Phonetic Alphabet to the consideration of those who feel an interest in a subject so well calculated to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, and promote the extension of morality and religion throughout the earth.

J. K. MITCHELL, M.D.,
Professor of Medicine in Jefferson
Medical College, Philadelphia.

GEORGE ALLEN,
Professor of Greek and Latin in the
University of Pennsylvania.

S. W. CRAWFORD, D.D.,
Principal of the Academical Depart-
ment of the University of Penn-
sylvania, and Professor of Didactic
and Pastoral Theology in the Theo-
logical Seminary of the Reformed
Presbyterian Church.

JOHN ROBERTSON,
Professor of Languages, No. 119 South
Ninth Street, Philadelphia.

THOMAS BALDWIN,
Principal of a Mathematical and
Classical School, Philadelphia, and
Associate Editor of Lippincott's
Pronouncing Gazetteer of the
World.

J. SIMMONS,
Principal of Locust Street Institute
for Young Ladies, Philadelphia.

A. B. IVINS, A.M.,
Principal of Friends' Central School,
Philadelphia.

LYMAN COLEMAN,
Principal of the Presbyterian Insti-
tute, Philadelphia.

JAMES BROWN,
Author of the Rational System of
English Grammar, Philadelphia.

A. T. W. WRIGHT,
Principal of the Normal School,
Philadelphia.

JOHN FAGAN,
Stereotyper, St. James' Street, Phi-
ladelphia.

H. E. WALLACE,
Editor of the Law Intelligencer, Phi-
ladelphia.

WM. CURRAN, M.D.,
A Controller of the Public Schools,
Philadelphia.

EDWIN THOMPSON,
Phonetic Compositor in John Fagan's
Stereotype Foundry, Philadelphia.

H. Y. LOUDERBACK,
Principal of Mount Vernon Male
Grammar School, Philadelphia.

WILLIAM ROBERTS,
Principal of Ringgold Grammar
School, Philadelphia.

EDWIN BOOTH,
A Controller of the Public Schools,
Philadelphia.

JOSEPH T. COOPER,
Editor of the Evangelical Repository,
and Pastor of the Second Associate
Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.

B. M. DUSENBERRY,
A Controller of the Public Schools,
Philadelphia.

E. B. MEARS,
Stereotyper, Harmony Court, Phil'a.

WILLIAM EVANS,
Phonetic Compositor, Office of the
Public Ledger, Philadelphia.

NELSON SIZER,
Professor of Phrenology, of the firm
of Fowlers, Wells, & Co., Phil'a.

E. CAPRON,
Editor of the Philadelphia Daily
Times.

EDWARD E. JONES,
Proprietor of the Daily Morning
Times, Philadelphia.

GEO. R. GRAHAM,
Editor of Graham's Magazine, Phi-
ladelphia.

WM. H. SICKLES,
A Controller of the Public Schools,
Philadelphia.

- S. DOUGLAS WYETH,
Stereotyper, No. 7 Pear Street, Philadelphia.
- ANDREW McMAKIN,
Editor of the American Courier, Philadelphia.
- R. J. HEMPHILL,
Secretary of the Board of Controllers of the Public Schools, Philadelphia.
- GEO. W. BURR,
A Controller of the Public Schools, Philadelphia.
- ROBERT E. PETERSON,
Editor of Peterson's Familiar Science, Philadelphia.
- C. SHERMAN,
Printer, No. 19 St. James Street, Philadelphia.
- A. H. LAIDLAW, A. M.,
Principal of the Monroe Boys' Grammar School, Philadelphia.
- P. A. CREGAR, A. M.,
Principal of the North-West Boys' Grammar School, Philadelphia.
- R. P. KING,
Printer, firm of King and Baird, Philadelphia.
- JOSEPH PANCOAST, M. D.,
Professor of Anatomy in Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia.
- JAMES W. McCALLISTER,
A Controller of the Public Schools, Philadelphia.
- TYLER LIPPINCOTT,
Phonetic Compositor in T. K. Collins's Printing Office, Philadelphia.
- JOHN SARTAIN,
Artist, and Editor of Sartain's Magazine, Philadelphia.
- SAMUEL DURBOROW,
Rector of the Church of the Evangelists, Philadelphia.
- A. BEATTY,
Rector of Trinity Church, Carbondale, Pennsylvania.
- D. M. HAMBLETON,
Attorney at Law, and Phonographic Reporter, Philadelphia.
- JAMES L. TYSON, M. D.,
Professor of Materia Medica and Therapeutics in the Philadelphia College of Medicine.
- C. CAMPBELL COOPER, M. D.,
President of the Board of Directors of Public Schools, 9th District, Philadelphia.
- E. CONVERSE,
Editor of the Christian Observer, Philadelphia.
- L. A. GODEY,
Editor of Godey's Lady Book, Philadelphia.
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Editor of the Presbyterian Banner, Philadelphia.
- W. B. JACOBS,
Editor of the Christian Chronicle, Philadelphia.
- M. McMICHAEL,
Editor of the North American and United States Gazette, Phila.
- B. R. LOXLEY,
Depository Agent of the American Baptist Publication Society, No. 118 Arch St., Philadelphia.
- J. P. ENGLS,
Publishing Agent of the Presbyterian Board of Publication, No. 265 Chestnut St., Philadelphia.
- JAMES C. SCOTT,
Depository Agent of Pennsylvania Bible Society, N. W. corner of 7th and Walnut, Philadelphia.
- ROBERT MORRIS,
Editor of the Pennsylvania Inquirer, Philadelphia.
- JAMES S. WALLACE,
Editor of the Philadelphia Sun.
- J. R. FLANIGEN,
Editor of the Daily News, Phila.
- SAMUEL C. UPHAM,
Editor of the Sunday Mercury, Phila.
- WILLIAM RICE,
Proprietor of the Pennsylvanian, Philadelphia.
- EDWARD W. WEBB,
Editor of the Pennsylvanian, Phila.

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JOHN M. COLEMAN,
For 18 years Principal of Grammar
School, Philadelphia.

JOHN LEYBURN,
Editor of the Presbyterian, Phila.

CHARLES WADSWORTH,
Pastor of Arch Street Church, Phila.

THEO. CUYLER,
President of the Board of Directors
of Public Schools, Eighth Section,
Philadelphia.

JOSEPH WRIGHT, A. M., V. D. M., Min-
ister of the Bible Christian Church,
Philadelphia, and for more than 25
years Principal of Millington Aca-
demy, Maryland.

HORACE M. MARTIN,
Editor of the Evening Argus, Phila.

JOHN CHAMBERS,
Pastor of the First Independent
Presbyterian Church, Broad St.,
Philadelphia, and one of the Vice-
Presidents of the Pennsylvania
Bible Society.

P. COOMBE,
Pastor of Fifth Street Methodist
Episcopal Church, Philadelphia.

J. A. ROCHE,
Pastor of the St. George's M. E.
Church, Philadelphia.

JOS. R. CHANDLER,
[For 25 years Editor of the United
States' Gazette, and afterwards
Member of Congress.]

WM. RAMSEY, D. D.,
Pastor of the Cedar Street Church,
Philadelphia.

J. COWPERTHWAIT,
A Director of the Girard College, and
for many years a Director and Con-
troller of the Public Schools of
Philadelphia.

WM. H. BATT,
Principal of Zane Street Boys' Gram-
mar School, Philadelphia.

JAMES BRYAN, A. M., M. D.,
Professor of Surgery in the Philadel-
phia College of Medicine.

SAMUEL SARTAIN,
Engraver on Steel, Philadelphia.

WM. F. BRADY,
Phonetic Compositor, Ledger Build-
ing, Philadelphia

*A Letter from George B. Wood, M. D., Professor of the Theory and Prac-
tice of Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania.*

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 28, 1855.

DEAR DOCTOR:

From what I know of your System of Phonology, from the great length
of time and diligent perseverance which you have devoted to this subject,
and from my knowledge of your general character and ability, I have no
doubt that your Treatise on Phonology, now in the press, will be a work
of much research and great usefulness, and should have no hesitation in
recommending it to all teachers of youth, and all others desirous of forming
a just estimate of spoken language.

Respectfully and truly yours,

GEO. B. WOOD.

DR. ANDREW COMSTOCK.

40 *A Letter from the Hon. Ira Mayhew, of Michigan.*

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,
MONROE, May 15, 1847.

DEAR SIR:

I received by yesterday's mail, "Comstock's Phonetic Reader," and "Speaker." I had before in my possession (received from some unknown source) your "Treatise on Phonology," No. 1, and the 1st, 2d, 3d, 7th, and 9th Nos. of your "Phonetic Magazine."

I was unable to give any attention to these works when first received. When I got a little time to devote to the subject, I took up the Treatise on Phonology, and I was unable to lay it down until I had completed its perusal. I placed it in the hands of my children, and judge what was my surprise to hear a daughter not yet six years old, read the first chapter of Genesis fluently, in less than one hour from the time she first saw a Phonetic character!

I wish you every possible success in your efforts to facilitate the acquisition of the English language. Permit me, sir, to express the hope that, when you shall have prepared the necessary elementary books, Phonology will become a common branch of study in the primary schools of this, and other States of the Union.

Very truly yours,

IRA MAYHEW, *Sup't. Public Instruction.*

TO ANDREW COMSTOCK, M. D., PHILADELPHIA.

A Letter from J. K. MITCHELL, M. D., the Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine, in Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, and a Member of the American Philosophical Society.

PHILADELPHIA, June 28, 1851.

ANDREW COMSTOCK, M. D.

Dear Sir—From a critical examination of your great theory of phonetics, I am glad to find that the system has already attained to completion. To me it is truly gratifying to learn that an alphabet exists which is strictly representative, not only of all the sounds, but of their various modifications in speech, in every language in which books are written upon the arts and sciences. I am glad to perceive this, because I consider a universal alphabet of the greatest value to the civilized world. A knowledge of your system enables the student, at once and always, to read every book printed conformably to it, not only in English, but in French, German, Latin, Greek, Spanish, Italian, &c. The greatest obstacle to the acquisition of one's vernacular, or any other language, is thus entirely removed, and the learner finds the only insuperable impediment to self-instruction totally obviated. Not only will your system of phonetics do these things, but it will produce that uniformity of pronunciation so desirable and so elegant.

I esteem your efforts of the greatest value, because I perceive that the dream of Franklin has become, in your hands, a profound reality.

I remain, dear sir, truly yours,

J. K. MITCHELL.

A Letter from the Rev. Samuel Aaron, Principal of Tree Mount Seminary.

NORRISTOWN, Pa., July 18, 1848.

DR. A. COMSTOCK :

My Dear Sir,—Although so little given to puffing that I have not for years even advertised my own school, a sense of duty compels me to notice in terms of the highest commendation the truly benevolent and philosophical efforts you are making to diffuse the knowledge and establish the use of *the perfect alphabet*.

As a teacher of young men and boys for many years, I have had a laborious and most painful experience in inculcating the thousands of absurdities and irregularities in English orthography. To stamp on the memory of youth a jargon imposed on us all by the authority of lexicographers, is an undertaking about equally hateful in the labor, hopeless in the prospect, and stupid in the accomplishment. The contradictions and enigmas in spelling are well adapted to beget in bright youths a persuasion, that the chain of knowledge, instead of being a series of beautifully connected links, is a tissue of tangled knots and kinks, and that teachers are a pack of arbitrary blockheads. A dull boy *never* learns to spell; a smart and willing one acquires the art after many years as a *hateful conventional necessity*.

Your alphabet, very agreeable to the eye, and, for aught I see, complete in the elementary sounds, can be learned in a few days by any one not an idiot; and then distinct reading follows in a few days more. I have no doubt a sprightly child, ignorant of all letters, could be taught by its use to read slowly but surely in one week; while now such reading is a work of years, and spelling is almost never learned.

I must commend your alphabet for its good appearance. Without meaning to disparage the "Anglo-Saxon," which I now receive, and with high respect for its conductors, I am free to say that the beautiful page of your New Testament is vastly superior to any other phonotypy I have seen.

It is perfectly truthful, but may seem like flattery, to say that your intelligent and tireless zeal in advancing this great reform, has no parallel so far as I know, and will doubtless be better rewarded by your own consciousness of benevolence and right intention than by any eulogy of mine. You will meet with much opposition, be ridiculed by the stupid, the conservative will inveigh against your "*mad innovation*," the literary bigot will dread the loss of his occupation, but time, perseverance, and the common sense of the world, will effect your triumph.

I heartily approve the publication of your intended monthly, and I hope it may soon be read and appreciated by many thousands.

My school will take sixty copies for one year; and be assured my pupils generally are as cordial as myself in the hope of your success.

Direct a copy to Dr. Dunlap, Norristown, your former pupil.

I am sincerely your affectionate friend,

SAMUEL AARON.

A Letter from Wm. H. Allen, LL.D., President of Girard College.

GIRARD COLLEGE, Aug. 31, 1855.

DR. A. COMSTOCK :

Dear Sir,—Having examined your Phonetic Alphabet, I believe that it is founded on a correct analysis of the elementary sounds of our language, and that its use would greatly facilitate the acquisition of the arts of reading and spelling, as well as promote uniformity in pronunciation. The characters which you have adopted, being the Roman and Greek letters, or modifications of them, are simple in form, easy to write, and pleasant to the eye, while the tone-marks, to indicate accent, inflection, and intonation, enable the reader to comprehend and represent the exact meaning of his author.

I recommend your alphabet to the attention of teachers and writers, in the belief that its introduction into general use would save years of irksome labor to children, and be the nearest approach which has been made to a "royal road to knowledge."

I remain, respectfully yours,

WM. H. ALLEN.

A Letter from the Rev. Lyman Coleman, D. D., Principal of the Presbyterian Institute, and Author of "An Historical Text-Book, and Atlas of Biblical Geography;" "Ancient Christianity Exemplified;" "Apostolic and Primitive Church," &c. &c.

DR. A. COMSTOCK :

Dear Sir,—I do but reiterate the common sentiment of all who have duly examined your Phonetic Alphabet, in giving expression to the conviction that the characters which you have adopted greatly surpass, in simplicity and beauty, all similar attempts to analyze and express the elementary sounds of our language; and I consider that your Pamphoneticon is the nearest approach which has ever been made to a universal alphabet.

Were it possible to reduce our spelling to a system so simple, so comprehensive, and complete, it would be an incalculable service to all who encounter the difficulties of the anomalous orthography of our noble language. Even should a reform so desirable prove unsuccessful, your efforts in this direction are not the less important to all those who study the first principles of our own, or of foreign languages.

Very respectfully yours,

LYMAN COLEMAN.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 6, 1855.

I concur entirely in the opinion of Dr. Coleman.

JOHN S. HART,

Principal of the Philadelphia High School.

September 7, 1855.